CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method for controlling a manufacturing system, the method

2   comprising:

3   intercepting a call requesting presentation of a standard user interface;

4   collecting data that defines how to modify the user interface; and

5   facilitating presentation of a modified user interface that has been modified in

6   relation to the collected data.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein intercepting a call comprises

2   intercepting a call to a printer user interface module.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein collecting data comprises collecting data

2   from a manufacturer control system.

1   4.   The method of claim 3, wherein collecting data from a manufacturer

2   control system comprises calling the manufacturer control system.

1   5.   The method of claim 4, wherein calling the manufacturer control system

2   comprises providing a set of functions to the manufacturer control system that the

3   control system can use to define features that are to be added to the standard user

4   interface.

1   6.   The method of claim 5, wherein facilitating presentation of a modified

2   user interface comprises receiving data that identifies at least one of data and code that

3   is pertinent to supporting the modified user interface.

1   7.   The method of claim 6, wherein facilitating presentation of a modified

2   user interface comprises providing the received data to a printer user interface module.

1   8.   The method of claim 7, wherein providing the received data comprises

2   calling the printer user interface module to provide a set of functions to the printer user

3   interface module that identify at least one of data and code that can be used to present

4   the modified user interface to the user.

1   9.   The method of claim 1, wherein facilitating presentation of a modified

2   user interface comprises modifying the standard user interface by at least one of adding

3   control features to the standard user interface that enable the user to control a print

4   mechanism in a specialized manner, adding control features to the standard user

5   interface that enable the user to control operation other system equipment, and

6   modifying the appearance of the standard user interface.

1   10.   The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a selection entered

2   by a user with the modified user interface and controlling system equipment in view of

3   the entered selection.

1   11.   The method of claim 10, wherein controlling system equipment

2   comprises controlling equipment other than a print mechanism with the modified user

3   interface.

1   12.   A control system for controlling a manufacturing system, the control

2   system comprising:

3   means for intercepting a call requesting display of a standard user interface;

4   means for collecting data that can be used to modify the standard user interface;

5   and

6   means for generating a modified user interface.

1   13.   The system of claim 12, wherein the means for collecting data comprise

2   means for providing a set of functions that can be used to define features that are to be

3   modified or added to the standard user interface.

1   14.   The system of claim 12, wherein the means for collecting data comprise

2   means for receiving pointers to at least one of data and code that is pertinent to

3   modifying the standard user interface.

1   15.   The system of claim 12, wherein the means for collecting data comprise

2   means for providing the collected data to a printer user interface module.

1   16.   The system of claim 15, wherein the means for providing the collected

2   data comprise means for providing a set of functions that identify at least one of data

3   and code that can be used to modify the standard user interface.

1   17.   The system of claim 16, wherein the means for providing a set of

2   functions comprise means for providing a set of functions that identify the location of at

3   least one of data and code that can be used to dynamically modify the standard user

4   interface.

1   18.   The system of claim 12, wherein the means for generating a modified

2   user interface comprise means for at least one of adding control features to the standard

3   user interface that enable the user to control a print mechanism in a specialized manner,

4   adding control features to the standard user interface that enable the user to control

5   operation other system equipment, and modifying the appearance of the standard user

6   interface.

1   19.   The system of claim 12, further comprising means for receiving a

2   selection entered by a user with the modified user interface and means for controlling

3   system equipment in view of the entered selection.

1   20.   A control system stored on a computer-readable medium, the system

2   comprising:

3   logic configured to intercept a calls made by a printer driver requesting display

4   of a standard user interface;

5   logic configured to request data that can be used to modify the standard user

6   interface;

7   logic configured to provide the requested data to a printer user interface module;

8   and

9   logic configured to generate a modified user interface using the provided data.

1   21.   The system of claim 20, wherein the logic configured to request data

2   comprises logic configured to provide a set of functions that can be used to define

3   features that are to be modified or added to the standard user interface.

1   22.   The system of claim 20, wherein the logic configured to request data

2   comprises logic configured to request pointers that identify at least one of data and code

3   that is pertinent to modifying the standard user interface.

1   23.   The system of claim 20, wherein the logic configured to provide the

2   requested data comprises logic configured to provide a set of functions that identify at

3   least one of data and code that can be used to modify the standard user interface.

1   24.   The system of claim 20, wherein the logic configured to provide the

2   requested data comprises logic configured to provide pointers that identify the location

3   of at least one of data and code that can be used to dynamically modify the standard user

4   interface.

1   25.   The system of claim 20, wherein the logic configured to generate a

2   modified user interface comprise logic configured to at least one of add control features

3   to the standard user interface that enable the user to control a print mechanism in a

4   specialized manner, add control features to the standard user interface that enable the

5   user to control operation other system equipment, and modify the appearance of the

6   standard user interface.

1   26.   The system of claim 20, further comprising logic configured to receive a

2   selection entered by a user with the modified user interface and logic configured to

3   control system equipment in view of the entered selection.

1   27.   A user interface modification system, comprising:

2   a specialty printing application manager that is configured to intercept a calls

3   made by a printer driver requesting display of a standard user interface and to request

4   data that can be used to modify a standard user interface; and

5   a manufacturer control system that is configured to provide data that can be used

6   to modify the standard user interface.

1   28.   The system of claim 27, wherein the specialty printing application

2   manager is configured to provide a set of functions to the manufacturer control system

3   that can be used to define features that are to be modified or added to the standard user

4   interface.

1   29.   The system of claim 27, wherein the specialty printing application

2   manager is further configured to provide the requested data to a printer user interface

3   module.

1   30.   The system of claim 29, wherein the specialty printing application

2   manager is configured to provide a set of functions to the printer user interface module

3   that identify at least one of data and code that can be used to modify the standard user

4   interface.

1   31.   The system of claim 27, wherein the manufacturer control system is

2   configured to provide pointers to the specialty printing application manager that identify

3   at least one of data and code that is pertinent to modifying the standard user interface.

1   32.   A specialty printing application manager stored on a computer-readable

2   medium, the manager comprising:

3   logic configured to intercept a calls made by a printer driver to a printer user

4   interface module;

5   logic configured to request data that can be used to modify the standard user

6   interface;

7   logic configured to receive the requested data; and

8   logic configured to provide the received data to a printer user interface module

9   such that the printer user interface module can modify the standard user interface to

10 present a modified user interface to a user.

1   33.   The manager of claim 32, wherein the logic configured to request data

2   comprises logic configured to provide a set of functions that can be used to define

3   features that are to be modified or added to the standard user interface.

1   34.   The manager of claim 32, wherein the logic configured to provide the

2   received data comprises logic configured to provide a set of functions to the printer user

3   interface module that identify at least one of data and code that can be used to modify

4   the standard user interface.